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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/714,868	11/18/2003	Noboru Matsuda	245619US2	3138
22850	7590	08/23/2005	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			WEISS, HOWARD	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2814	

DATE MAILED: 08/23/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/714,868

Applicant(s)

MATSUDA, NOBORU

Examiner

Howard Weiss

Art Unit

2814

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 June 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 ~~is~~ are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 15-20 ~~is~~ are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 ~~is~~ are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 18 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1103.0505.0605</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Attorney's Docket Number: 245619US2

Filing Date: 11/18/03

Continuing Data: none

Claimed Foreign Priority Date: 3/28/03 (JPX)

Applicant(s): Matsuda

Examiner: Howard Weiss

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election of Group I, Claims 1 to 14, in the response filed on 6/16/05 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (M.P.E.P. § 818.03(a)).
2. Claims 15 to 20 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant is requested to cancel the non-elected claims as part of a complete response to this office action. Cancellation of the non-elected claims would not preclude the later filing of a divisional application on the non-elected invention (please see 35 USC 120 and 121).

Specification

3. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1, 2, 5 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kubo (JP 2001-284588).

Kubo shows all aspects of the instant invention (e.g. Figures 1 to 10) including:

- a first semiconductor layer **2** of a first conductivity
- a second semiconductor layer **11** of a second conductivity where a channel is able to form as claimed
- a trench **7** penetrating the second semiconductor layer and intruding into the first semiconductor layer
- a thick gate insulating film **9** provided on the wall of the trench, below the surface of the first semiconductor layer and filling a bottom the trench with a flat surface
- a thin gate insulating film **10** provided on an upper part of an inner trench wall
- a gate electrode **13** filling the trench
- a semiconductor region of a second conductivity type (see Figure 6) with a lower part of said region substantially aligned to the boundary of the thick and thin gate insulating film

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Initially, and with respect to Claims 6, 8 and 13, note that a "product by process" claim is directed to the product per se, no matter how actually made. See *In re Thorpe et al.*, 227 USPQ 964 (CAFC, 1985) and the related case law cited therein which make it clear that it is the final product per se which must be determined in a "product by process" claim, and not the patentability of the process, and that, as

here, an old or obvious product produced by a new method is not patentable as a product, whether claimed in "product by process" claims or not. As stated in Thorpe, even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. *In re Brown*, 459 F.2d 531, 535, 173 USPQ 685, 688 (CCPA 1972); *In re Pilkington*, 411 F.2d 1345, 1348, 162 USPQ 145, 147 (CCPA 1969); *Buono v. Yankee Maid Dress Corp.*, 77 F.2d 274, 279, 26 USPQ 57, 61 (2d. Cir. 1935).

Note that Applicant has burden of proof in such cases as the above case law makes clear.

8. Claims 6, 8 to 10 and 12 to 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Kubo .

Kubo shows all aspects of the instant invention (see Paragraph 5). As to the grounds of rejection under section 103(a), how the semiconductor region is formed, either by selectively reversing the conductivity type of a part of the first semiconductor layer near the second semiconductor layer or by some other means such as implantation, or aligned, either in a self-aligned manner or by some other means, pertains to intermediate process steps and does not affect the final device structure. See MPEP § 2113 which discusses the handling of "product by process" claims and recommends the alternative (§ 102 / § 103) grounds of rejection.

Since the Applicant has not established the criticality of the concentrations stated and since these concentrations are in common use in similar devices in the art, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use these values in the device of Kubo. Where patentability is said to be based upon particular chosen dimensions or upon another variable recited in a claim, the applicant must show that the chosen dimensions are critical. *In re Woodruff*, 919 F.2d 1575, 1578, 16 USPQ2d 1934, 1936 (Fed. Cir. 1990).

9. Claims 4 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kudo and Hshieh (U.S. Patent No. 6,262,453).

Kudo show most aspects of the instant invention (Paragraphs 5 and 8) except for the thick gate insulating film having a thickness smaller than half the width of the trench, a recess enclosed by said thick film and the gate electrode filling the recess. Hshieh teaches (e.g. Figure 2A) to have a thick gate insulating film **120'** having a thickness smaller than half the width of a trench **115**, a recess enclosed by said thick film and the gate electrode **125** filling the recess to prevent an early breakdown at the bottom of the trenched gate (Column 4 Lines 58 to 64). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to have a thick gate insulating film having a thickness smaller than half the width of a trench, a recess enclosed by said thick film and the gate electrode filling the recess as taught by Hshieh in the device of Kudo to prevent an early breakdown at the bottom of the trenched gate.

Conclusion

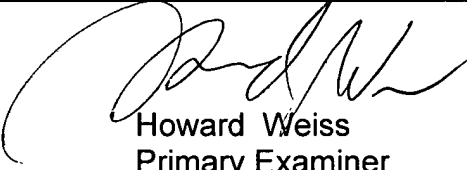
10. Papers related to this application may be submitted directly to Art Unit 2814 by facsimile transmission. The faxing of such papers must conform with the notice published in the Official Gazette, 1096 OG 30 (15 November 1989). The Art Unit 2814 Fax Center number is **(571) 273-8300**. The Art Unit 2814 Fax Center is to be used only for papers related to Art Unit 2814 applications.
11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Howard Weiss at **(571) 272-1720** and between the hours of 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM (Eastern Standard Time) Monday through Friday or by e-mail via **Howard.Weiss@uspto.gov**. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wael Fahmy, can be reached on **(571) 272-1705**.

Art Unit: 2814

12. The following list is the Examiner's field of search for the present Office Action:

Field of Search	Date
U.S. Class / Subclass(es): 257/330, 333	8/18/05
Other Documentation: PLUS Analysis Report	8/16/05
Electronic Database(s): EAST, IEL, ScienceDirect, PAJ	8/18/05

HW/hw
19 August 2005



Howard Weiss
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2814